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8th Annual GSA SmartPay Conference & DOC Meeting

The 8th Annual GSA SmartPay Conference will be held this year in St. Louis, MO, August 1-3, 2006. Registration is not yet available on line. Conference details are still in the planning phase. Check the GSA web site <http://www.gsasmartpayconference.org> for conference details as they become available. This opportunity for Purchase, Travel and Fleet networking is invaluable to program coordinators and others with program oversight. On Thursday, August 3, 2006, the Commerce Bankcard Center will host a meeting for the Department of Commerce conference attendees from 1:00—4:00 to discuss DOC specific program issues and share ideas learned from the conference workshops. Please set aside these dates on your calendar and make plans to attend this annual event. You will find it a worthwhile experience. After registering on line with GSA, contact pat.d.stone@noaa.gov to confirm attendance at the DOC meeting.



This year's theme.....

"Meet Us In St. Louis"

SmartPay Newsletter

March 2006

DOC Spend Analysis Project

On March 6, DOC's Spend Analysis briefing was presented to Office of Acquisition Management and Office of Financial Management by Citibank and Stark Consulting. Stark Consulting is the subcontractor to VISA who has developed the spend analysis tools and has used DOC FY2004 accounts payable data to match VISA vendor files with our DOC vendor information.

The spend analysis, data management and reporting has been provided to DOC by Citibank and VISA at no cost.

Stark analyzed 370,000 DOC payments with a value of \$2.2 billion. Out of the transactions, 69,000 payments were made to companies that accept VISA credit cards. This identifies an opportunity to shift some reoccurring payments from accounts payable to purchase cards, where they can increase refunds and eliminate prompt payment late fees.

There are reasons why some of these charges need to remain on purchase orders, but there is a broad area of opportunity to move the payment management of courier services, such as Fedex and telecommunication charges such as Verizon and Sprint to purchase cards. This transition can significantly reduce the workload of reconciliation in the Finance offices.

The agreed upon next steps are to prepare a 30 minute briefing for the Finance Officers Council meeting in April

Plans are to share the presentation with the CFO and the HCO Councils in the future. VISA is willing to fund presentations to three agencies within Commerce so they can review their data. Data collected from this type of analysis feeds into the "Strategic Sourcing" effort by going to vendors who do high volume business with DOC and negotiate discounted pricing.

Refresher Training for Purchase Card and Travel

In accordance with OMB Circular A123, all program participants must be trained every three years. Plans are underway to begin the refresher training process for all purchase card approving officials and cardholders as well as the travel cardholders. Agency Program Coordinators are getting the word out to their service areas that they are going to begin monitoring and tracking the training of their service areas. Currently, the GSA on-line training product will be utilized. However other training products are being reviewed that can be adapted to DOC specific policies. When a new training module is adopted by DOC, the required training will switch from the GSA on-line training to the new product. All coordinators will be notified and in turn will share this information with their service areas.

Citibank Travel Statements & On-Line Payments

At the beginning of the calendar year, Citibank enhanced the viewing of on-line travel statements. Cardholders can now see charges posted throughout the cycle. Previously the on line statement transactions were visible only at the end of the billing cycle. Citibank reports the volume of payments made using Citibank Online Statements continues to increase. The number of payments made has quadrupled since January 2005. DOC travel cardholders are urged to utilize the on-line feature for prompt posting of payments to their accounts and to avoid late payments.

<https://www.onlinestatements.cards.citidirect.com/>.

This is a self registration system. You will sign in with your account information and create a user ID and key question. Citibank will then e-mail your password. There is no charge for this payment option. If you need assistance at any time, contact the CitiDirect Help Desk at 1-800-790-7206.

